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RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//JF/UNMA//
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J3//
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUMICEA/JICCENT MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFIUU/COMSOCCENT MACDILL AFB FL
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2301
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 2499
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000963

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TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: PRT/LASHKAR GAH - POPPY ERADICATION:
GOVERNOR CONCERNED OVER SECURITY, LOGISTICS, AND
STABILITY

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¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Helmand Governor Daud told visiting Combined Forces Command/Afghanistan Deputy Commanding General (DCG) Major General Wilson on March 4th that he is concerned over eradication security and the apparent lack of provisions for the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP). On the political front, the Governor is worried that the Taliban may use the eradication campaign to sow more hostility towards the provincial government. General Wilson advised the Governor to take a "sure and safe" approach to eradication to avoid upsetting the balance of security in the province. END SUMMARY.

SECURITY

¶2. (SBU) As he has done on numerous occasions, Governor Daud expressed concern over the security situation. Specifically, the logistics for the ANA and the ANP do not appear to be in place, thus limiting their utility. He noted especially the lack of ammunition for the police. The Governor said that as many of the local police used their own weapons and these were not registered ANP weapons, the MOI was not supplying ammunition. The Interior Minister had agreed to do so, but Daud stated that bureaucracy was preventing the actual supply. The

ANP sent from Kabul had arrived by bus and lacked transport, fuel, and food. Other ANA located around the Sangin area are tied down because of recurring attacks. In addition to the logistics problems, Provincial officials, with CFC-A assistance, only began setting up the Joint Command Center on March 15.

13. (SBU) The Governor also expressed concern about the 500 "auxiliary" ANP that he intends to use for the eradication campaign. He concluded that he must keep 200 in Lashkar Gah as a quick reaction force. While the Governor claimed that they are "registered," he also noted that they are untrained. The Governor is also concerned about the financial picture, noting that he has not been given additional funds to support this force. General Wilson agreed with the Governor that the situation is not satisfactory

STABILITY

14. (SBU) On the political front, Governor Daud expressed concern that the Taliban will take advantage of the eradication campaign to convince people to oppose the government. The Governor said that many farmers whose fields are eradicated will be angry. They have expectations that help, in the form of alternative livelihoods, will follow eradication. If that does not materialize, there will likely be increased support for the Taliban, which could be a destabilizing factor. The Governor said that, with the security factors and the limited government capacity, the eradication campaign "will

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be very difficult." On the positive side, the Governor stated that, if the eradication campaign is successful, it will be a sign of the Government of Afghanistan's ability to extend its influence and lead to a more stable Helmand.

MEASURED APPROACH

15. (SBU) Governor Daud said that, regarding eradication, he is under pressure from many directions, including the MOI, the Ministry of Counternarcotics, and the US and UK embassies. He is determined to move ahead, noting that there must be a "strong effort," to show the people that there is governance and rule of law in Helmand province.

16. (SBU) General Wilson advised the Governor to take a steady and safe approach. The DCG noted that, if he assessed that security might seriously deteriorate, it might be advisable to adjust the eradication plan. He urged the Governor not to place too much public emphasis on a particular target; nor should the Governor feel pressurized to reach a particular target as he should be the one to judge how fast and far to push.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) While the US-led Afghan Eradication Force is in place and ready to go, it appears that pulling the logistics together for the security forces is a major challenge. The Governor is walking a difficult line on the eradication campaign. Security is fragile - in Sangin, for example, where the district chief was murdered on March 3, there is

virtually no government control. Whether the eradication campaign will add or detract from provincial governance remains an open question.

NEUMANN